



Painted by Thos Phillips, R.A.

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HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK & ALBANY.

Frederick Duke of York

PRINTED FOR A. & C. LONDON 1838

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SERMON.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

DUKE OF YORK,

COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES.

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OF YORK, UPPER CANADA,

AT THE GARRISON SERVICE, ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 11, 1827.



BY THE REV. J. HUDSON, A. M.

Chaplain to the Forces and Fellow of St. Peter's College, Cambridge.



YORK, U. C.

PRINTED BY ROBERT STANTON,

PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

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TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR PEREGRINE MAITLAND, K. C. B.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

OF

THE PROVINCE OF UPPER CANADA,

AND

MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDING HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES THEREIN,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING SERMON IS,

BY PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S OBEDIENT,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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SERMON.

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1 TIMOTHY II. 1, 2, 3.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For Kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

AMONG the many passages which might be produced from the Sacred Scriptures, to shew that the Christian Religion sanctions and upholds the authority of Kings, and of all others who lawfully bear rule over us, the text is one. Indeed, the doctrine of submission and obedience to such authority holds a prominent place, both in the discourses of our blessed Saviour and in the writings of His inspired Apostles. It is not incidentally noticed as a duty of minor importance, but is closely interwoven with the most vital and distinguishing principles of the Gospel. And this exhortation or charge of St. Paul to Timothy, Bishop of the Church of Ephesus, directs him to take care, that prayers, such as are therein enumerated, should be offered up in all Christian Churches under his inspection and jurisdiction.

Whence also, we may understand that, it is our truest interest as well as duty, to strive to promote by these pious means, the prosperity and happiness of those individuals interested with the high responsibility of the Government under which we live. For we see that the most important consequences are connect-

ed with, and made to depend upon the fulfilment of the Apostle's exhortation. It involves no less than the internal peace and prosperity of the Nation to which we belong ; it promotes the practice of true religion and virtue ; and, above all, it is required of us by the Almighty under the Gospel, in imitation of his example * " who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Our Saviour and his Apostles did not, however, in any case or under any circumstances, endeavour to bring about a change or reform in the modes of Government, then existing in the Countries in which they planted the Gospel. This was altogether foreign to their purpose. Their sole object was, agreeably to the spirit of true religion which they taught, to instil into the hearts of men, no matter to what Nation, Kingdom, or People they might belong, those principles of righteousness, justice, and mercy, the prevalence and practice of which, in their full extent and purity, could not fail to improve the condition of all Governments, to correct and mitigate the evils of the worst, and to perfect the excellencies of the best.

The Kings whom the Apostle here recommends to the prayers of their Christian Subjects, were unconverted to the faith of the Gospel, yet were they not on this account excluded from, or regarded as unworthy the prayers and thanksgivings of the people to God. And although the Emperors of Rome, during the ministry of St. Paul, were vicious and abandoned characters, and most determined and bitter persecutors of the Disciples of Christ, yet we find this Apostle in his † Epistle to the Christians of that City, expressly insisting upon the necessity of the duty of submission to their lawfully appointed Rulers ; and that, because they are appointed for the public good. Our Blessed Lord himself too, when that captious and insidi-

* 1 Tim. ii. 4

† See Rom. 13. first 7 verses.

ous question was put to him by the Pharisees, whether it were lawful to pay tribute unto the Roman Emperor or not, replied with admirable wisdom, * "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are Gods." These are words which convey a doctrine of infinite importance to the peace and welfare of Society, as well as to the interests of Christianity, inasmuch as we are herein taught, upon Divine authority, that to submit to the established Government under which we live, even though in the hands of Heathen Rulers, is perfectly consistent with our worshipping God in righteousness and true holiness, and with our rendering unto him the honor due unto his name. Surely, then, if "supplication, prayer; intercession, and giving of thanks," were due in behalf of those Heathen Princes, and if obedience to their authority is enjoined by the Gospel, it is but reasonable to infer that the same tribute and obedience are at least equally due in behalf of those Princes who, having been baptized into the faith of Christ, are endeavouring to preserve it's purity and to promote it's progress in the world.

By speaking of Kings and Rulers as ministers of God's gracious purposes to mankind, and enjoining a suitable respect and obedience to be paid to their lawful authority, the Gospel tends, as has been well observed, to secure for Governments in general, that stability and power which are necessary for the effectual and beneficial discharge of their important trusts.— And, by declaring that they have an interest in the prayers of those over whom they bear rule, it reminds Princes and all others in exalted stations, that they are but frail and fallible beings requiring the aid and protection of HIM, † "by whom Kings reign and Princes decree justice." These considerations have certainly a powerful tendency to soften the rigour of even tyrannical dominion, and to discipline the hearts of the Mighty

* Matt. xxiii. 21. † Prov. viii. 15.

to that meekness and moderation, which are so requisite in order to the tempering of justice and judgment with mercy.— Moreover, the supplications of a people for their Rulers afford them a constant and a useful admonition, that, though with regard to their elevated rank they are entitled, as the word of God entitles them, to honor and subjection, yet they must both live and * “die like men,” equally amenable to the tribunal of HIM WHO IS KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, who † “standeth in the congregation of Princes, and judgeth among the Gods.” Of that sad inheritance which sin hath entailed upon the human race, death, regarded merely as the dissolution of the animal frame, is commonly viewed as a bitter portion. Independent of its pains and sufferings, and its eternal consequences, it is a change which frequently strikes the imagination with horror and dismay. But more especially so, when we are called upon to contemplate the work of death on those in whom we have *all* an interest. For who is there that can with calmness and composure think of the remains of the mighty and the great returning to dust and ashes? Whom, on such occasions can fail to call to mind the language of inspired truth that, ‡ “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in Princes!” Who, when such signal instances of mortality occur, can but be sensibly convinced of the uncertainty and instability of all earthly good, and that || “here we have no continuing City?” Who, when Providence gives such a general and solemn warning to a nation, can remain unimpressed with a deep and an abiding sense of his own responsibility, and of the strict account, which we must all one day give at the awful tribunal of Almighty God?

There are few, I believe, if any among us who are not ready

* Psalm lxxxii. 7. † Psalm lxxxii. 1. ‡ Psalm cxviii. 8, 9.
|| Heb. xiii. 14.

to admit that the calamity which has lately overshadowed the Throne of England, and which is now casting a cloud of sorrow and of mourning over all her Dominions, far and near, is of that description which ranks it among those sad afflictions, that affect us with the deepest interest. For though we are well aware that it is a most important Christian duty to bow submissively to that gracious Providence, which ordereth all thing in wisdom, and to evince our resignation to the Divine will: yet it is also our duty to receive the present visitation as it ought to be received by a people professing the Religion of the Gospel of Christ; that Religion, which recommends those who are in high command and eminent station to the prayers of those under their authority, and which makes the prosperity and virtue of Princes a cause of thanksgiving to the people.— In the common course of Providence the fate of Kingdoms seems to depend much on the character of those who govern them, and the Scriptures, especially those of the Old Testament, relating to the Jewish and other nations, confirm the fact. The virtues of Princes may, therefore, be justly regarded as a valuable public inheritance, well pleasing in the sight of the Lord. And great reason have we to offer up to Him our daily supplications, for their guidance and protection, under the heavy trials and burdens of their station; and likewise to mourn and humble ourselves, as under an afflicting dispensation, when we are deprived of excellencies fitted to adorn the most exalted rank.

I will not attempt upon this solemn occasion, to compute the sum of the lamentable loss we have sustained, or to enumerate all the reasons we have to mourn, or yet, to recount all the claims, which our sincerely beloved and departed Prince has to the regret that attends him to the tomb. Indeed, such an undertaking is in a great measure unnecessary among the majority of those I am addressing. For so well known, and so deeply

engraven are his practical virtues on the hearts of our brave and loyal Soldiers; over whom he so long and so ably presided, that the personal recollection of each individual supersedes the necessity of a formal recital of them.

But still, we may upon the present occasion advert to them generally, and pay a deserved tribute of respect to the memory of him, whom we had thought to have seen filling the most exalted Station; but who has been called away from the prospect of an earthly Sceptre to enjoy, as we hope, an Heavenly and an enduring Crown. We may, indeed, gratefully acknowledge the benefits and blessings procured by his exertions.

Here, however, it behoves us in contemplating the characters of those whom Providence has been pleased to set over us, ever to bear in mind the peculiar dangers with which they are surrounded, and to regard their conduct in connexion with their circumstances and situations.

The difficulties and temptations of ordinary life, are to them increased in a very formidable degree. They can scarcely fail to perceive that the gratification of their wishes is the express object and the highest pride of multitudes around them. Consequently, there must be imminent danger lest they should be led to regard the indulgence of their passions, as nothing more than a reasonable conformity with the circumstances, in which they are placed.

Whenever, therefore, we discover a character intrusted with high responsibility and command, and placed in a situation thus unfavorable to the growth and improvement of virtuous principles, yet still preserving a vigorous resolution to do that which is just and right, and evincing such firm judgment and discretion, as could alone enable him successfully to surmount the difficulties, and honorably to discharge the duties of his arduous and trying station—how can we withhold from the memory

of so estimable a person the passing tribute of respect and veneration? Of *Virtue* it has been remarked that, in whatever rank it may be found, it is always a commanding spectacle; that it extorts the unwilling homage of wickedness itself; but that it is infinitely more commanding when seen in exalted station. It appears there exposed to all the fascinating allurements, which are so dangerous to our frail and fallen nature, and surrounded with snares and temptations which require a strength of mind and an integrity of principle to resist, not generally possessed, yet calmly superior to these enticements, and seeking its enjoyment in those pursuits which preserve a conscience void of offence.

It cannot, therefore, I think, be deemed a deviation from the path of the Sacred Service of Religious Worship, if, while all classes of Britain's sons join in the general theme of mourning and lamentation, we who are at this hour assembled, acknowledge with unfeigned sorrow, the heavy loss we have sustained by the death of him, who rose superior to the dangers and difficulties with which he was surrounded; and who, deeply impressed with the important responsibility of his situation, was most anxious and most diligent in the discharge of those obligations which he had to fulfil in his public capacity of Commander-in-Chief; if, in the true spirit of the Apostle's exhortation, we cherish in our breasts a grateful remembrance of those beneficial effects, which flowed from the counsels and command of our late illustrious Prince; and which constitute so great a portion of the comfort and the happiness of our Soldiers. The unremitting care and attention which he bestowed upon every department under his authority; the devotion of his time and talents to the making of such wise regulations, as have for their object the interest and advancement of all, without tending to the prejudice of any; the mild de-

portment, and the kind and unassuming demeanour which he invariably preserved; his readiness to attend to the appeals, and to redress the grievances of the lower, as well as, of the higher ranks, with impartiality and without distinction of persons—these were some of the many amiable qualities possessed by His Royal Highness, and which gained for him universal, and deserved esteem and affection.

But among the many and valuable advantages resulting from his exertions and endeavors to promote the welfare of those committed to his care and command, it would be the highest dereliction of duty, as well as of gratitude, to overlook that general and extensive diffusion of the means of Religious knowledge and instruction, which now so happily prevails. It is recorded of our late revered and pious Sovereign, that it was the dearest wish of his heart, that he might see the day when there should not be a poor child in his dominions, who could not read his Bible. And it may be mentioned to the honor of this his departed Son, that this benevolent and pious principle has, under his auspices, been acted up to in the education of the young and ignorant, and in gratuitously supplying every individual Soldier with the Holy Scriptures. The injunction that we are to * “train up a child in the way he should go,” has been obeyed, and we cannot doubt the fulfilment of the prediction, that, “when he is old he will not depart from it.” And, finally, this illustrious Prince and Commander fostered with his patronage and support, every institution that had for its object the amelioration of human wretchedness.

Thus, by attending to both the spiritual and temporal wants of his fellow Creatures, he evinced a thorough conviction of the great and momentous truths of Revelation, that † “Verily

* Prov. xxii. 6.

† Psalm lviii. 11.

there is a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth." He hereby manifested his firm trust in the protection of Him, "who doeth as he pleaseth among the inhabitants of the earth," and his belief, that, "unless the Lord go forth with our Armies, vain is the help of man."

Having made this brief allusion to the endearing qualities possessed by our departed Prince, and to the beneficial effects which have resulted from his high command; it may be no unprofitable conclusion on the present occasion, to impress our minds with the solemn warnings of Divine Providence. They should lead us to reflect seriously on our own mortality; they are well calculated to awaken in us a lively sense of our own condition, and to produce vigilance and circumspection against the temptations and assaults of our spiritual enemies.

The messenger of Death, whenever he arrives, is generally an unwelcome visitor. Man naturally clings to existence: but the period will arrive to all, and is daily arriving to many of us, when we must for ever resign our earthly pursuits and possessions. Before that period mankind are usually favored with numerous warnings, which address them in language not to be misunderstood, * "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." We all unhesitatingly acknowledge the uncertainty of the life of man: scarce any truth is so universally admitted; but many do not apply it to themselves. They allow, indeed, that the common debt of nature must be paid by all; but, unhappily, they do not so effectually believe or think of it, as to be influenced in their conduct by the fact.

Whilst, then, we hear with humility the voice which has spoken in this afflicting dispensation, let us strive to profit by the lesson of instruction it conveys.

* Matt. xxiv. 44.

Let us thankfully praise the Lord of Hosts for the inestimable Benefits and Blessings he hath permitted us to enjoy under the authority of him who is now *gone to his reward*.

Let us earnestly implore our Heavenly Father, to shower down his choicest Blessings upon our present gracious and affectionate Sovereign; and especially to support and direct him in this his hour of heavy and deep-felt affliction. And let us ever bear in mind that, it is our duty to honor and obey the King; to pray for him, for all that are in authority, and for all mankind; "for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." That thus, when "the Kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ," we may through the merits of our Redeemer be admitted into *everlasting habitations*.

* Rev. xi. 15.

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